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the contemplation of God himself. O let not then this noble spirit lie any longer groveling in the mire of the earth ! Let not this will that was made to be a queen, be a slave to flesh and blood. Let not this understanding, this mind, this thought that should contemplate heavenly truths, be bowed down to empty earthly toys.

Conclude to be ever humble, by the sense and remembrance of thy own nothing : and to be ever grateful to thy Maker, by a constant return of love and service. *Pater. Ave.*

M E D I T A T I O N II.

On our last end.

1. **C**ONSIDER first, my soul, why thou camest hither. What is thy business in this mortal life ? for what end has God made thee ? upon what errand has he sent thee hither ? This should have been the subject of thy meditation from thy first coming to the use of reason : and hast thou ever yet seriously thought on it ? Thou canst not here plead ignorance : for it was one of the first things thou wast taught, that thou wast made for God ; and that thou mightest know, love and serve him here, and so come to enjoy him hereafter in a happy eternity. O how noble, how glorious, how blessed is this end for which thou wast made ! O how good is thy God, who has made thee for himself and for heaven ; and has designed this happiness from all eternity for thee !

B 2.

Consider.

Consider secondly, that properly speaking thou hast but one business in life, viz. to answer this end for which thou wast made; by dedicating thyself in good earnest to the love and service of thy Maker. This is that *one thing necessary*: *Luke x. 42.* If thou apply thyself seriously to this great business, all is well: if thou neglect this, all is lost, whatever success thou mayst meet with in every thing else. *O what will it profit a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul,* and at the same time lose his God, and a happy eternity? O then let all other business be ever subordinate to this: let all that no ways conduces to this, be despised as vain and unprofitable: and all that is opposite to this be avoided and rejected as hurtful and pernicious. *O vanity of vanities, and all is vanity,* but the loving God and serving him alone. *Kempis.*

Consider thirdly, the great blindness and misery of worldlings, who live in a continual forgetfulness of this their only business: whose pursuits are after vanities; who weary themselves like children in running after butterflies, and catching at mere bubbles and empty shadows; vain honours, false riches, and momentary pleasures; whilst they neglect eternity. And has not this been hitherto thy case, O my soul! O be confounded then at the thought of thy having been so senseless, so wretched! Detest the errors of thy past life: and now at least turn to thy God.

Conclude to offer thy whole being to him that made thee for himself: and to attend for the future to thy only business. *Pater. Ave.* ME-



MEDITATION III.

On our redemption through Christ.

CONSIDER first, how man being originally created in justice and sanctity, to be happy here in grace and innocence, and eternally happy hereafter in the enjoyment of his Creator; wretchedly fell from God by sin; forfeited his original justice, and all the advantages annexed to it; and incurred all kind of miseries; together with a double death, both for time and eternity. Thus all mankind came to be involved in sin and misery: the understanding was blinded, the will perverted, the whole soul in disorder; strangely weak to any thing that is good; and violently inclined to evil. Thus we became aliens from God, slaves to satan, sin, and hell; utterly incapable of ourselves to make one step towards obtaining mercy or grace; and must have inevitably fallen from one misery to another, till at length we fell into hell. Ah! the dreadful consequences of sin! Ah! what should we have done if God had not given us a Saviour?

Consider secondly, the infinite goodness of God, who, without any manner of merit on our sides (for what could we merit in that wretched condition?) has given us his own Son to be our Saviour; to deliver us from all our miseries; to rescue us from satan, sin, and hell; and to bring us mercy, grace, and eternal salvation.

O what could God do more to testify his infinite love ? what has not the Son of God done ; what has he not suffered for the love of us ? from the first moment of his conception in the womb of the Virgin, till his shedding the last drop of his blood, and expiring upon the cross, he has been employed in seeking our eternal welfare and in loving us. O what return shall we make for this love !

Consider thirdly, what God has given us in giving us his Son : what goods he brings along with him to enrich us. He comes to be our Redeemer, our Teacher, our Pattern, our Repairer ; the Father of our souls ; our Brother ; our Spouse, and ever-faithful Lover ; our High Priest, and our Sacrifice ; our Friend and Physician ; our Advocate and Mediator ; our Food, our Light, our universal Good ; the Way, the Truth and the Life of our souls. O what immense treasures he brings with him ! and all these he desires to impart to us. And shall not we, my soul, embrace this infinite goodness ? and having all things in our Jesus desire nothing out of him ? He from the first moment of his incarnation was wholly ours : Let us from this moment at least be wholly his.

Conclude, since by the benefit of your redemption, Christ has ransomed you from your slavery, and purchased you for himself, to behave henceforward worthily of so great a Redeemer. The world, the flesh and the devil have no title to you. Give yourselves to him, who has bought you with the price of his own blood. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDI-

MEDITATION IV.

On our being dedicated to God in baptism.

1. **C**ONSIDER first, O christian soul, how happily, and holily, thou wast dedicated and consecrated to God at thy baptism. There thou wast washed from sin, by virtue of the precious blood of Christ; and *cleansed by the laver of water, in the word of life.* There thou wast regenerated, by a new birth in Christ; engrafted in him; and made the adopted child of God. There thou wast consecrated to be the temple of the Deity. There the Spirit of God took possession of thee: adorned thee, and enriched thee with all his heavenly gifts and graces. There thou wast made a queen, a sister and companion for Angels; and receivedst an indisputable right and title to a never-ending kingdom, with the true and living God. O christians, be mindful of this dignity, to which you have been advanced by your baptism. *You are,* says St. Peter, (1 Pet. ii. 9.) *a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people.* See then you never degenerate; nor forfeit all this glory, and all your happiness for time and eternity, by wilful sin.

Consider, secondly, the covenant you made with God in baptism; in consequence of which God received you then into the number of his children, and gave you a title to heaven. You entered then into articles with him; by which you
promised

promised ever to adhere to him ; by a firm and constant *faith* of all his revealed truths ; a strict *obedience* to all his commandments ; and a perpetual *renunciation* of the *devil*, and of all his *works* of darkness, and worldly *pomps*. Has your life been agreeable to these articles ? Have you kept this covenant ! Have you been true to your allegiance ? Have you observed your solemn vows ? Ah ! how few can lay their hands upon their hearts, and say they have not broken these articles : And yet their all depends upon the observing of them.

Consider thirdly, that in your baptism you was clothed with the robe of innocence ; with a strict injunction to preserve it, and to carry it unstained to the judgment-seat of Christ : In token of which a white garment was put upon you by the minister of God, with these words : *Receive this white garment, which thou shalt carry without spot or stain before the tribunal of Christ, in order to inherit everlasting life.* O how happy are those souls that preserve this robe of innocence ! O how miserable are they that lose it ; that cast it away ; that exchange it for the filth of sin ! And as for thee, my soul, what is become of the *white garment* thou hast received ? O how shalt thou dare to appear without it, before the judgment seat of Christ ?

Conclude to live up, for the time to come, to the dignity of a Christian ; and to your baptismal engagements : and to repair all past miscarriages by a penitential life. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION V.

On the evil of falling from God by sin.

1. **C**ONSIDER first, that of all evils that can befall the soul on this side of hell, there is none comparable to the evil of falling from God by wilful sin. A dreadful and most dismal evil indeed, to fall from the supreme and infinite good, into the very bottomless pit of wretchedness and misery. O ! call to mind, dear christians, out of your former meditations, that God is your first beginning, and your last end ; by whom, and for whom you were created : that all your good and all your happiness is to be found in him : O ! remember that the Son of God has purchased all that is good for you, with his own most precious blood ; and that he has made all over to you : Remember that you were dedicated to God in your baptism : that your souls were made children of the eternal Father, spouses of the eternal Son, temples of the eternal Spirit, and heiresses to an eternal kingdom. But alas ! in the moment you consent to mortal sin, all is lost : you fall from your first beginning and your last end : you turn your back upon your universal good : you forfeit the grace and salvation purchased for you by Jesus Christ : you lose all the glorious titles and prerogatives you received in baptism : you become from that time forward most vile and contemptible, most wretched and miserable,

miserable, most filthy and abominable; dead to God, slaves to the devil, possessed by him; and victims of hell. O! dread and fly, hate and detest so great an evil.

Consider, secondly, the extravagance, the folly, and madness of that soul, which in this manner falls from God: Alas! she exchanges God for the devil, grace for sin, heaven for hell; all her good at present, and a happy eternity hereafter for a transitory toy, a brutish passion, an irksome slavery, a shadow, a bubble, a mere nothing. O unhappy sinner, open thy eyes, and see the wretched bargain thou hast made! See how strangely thou hast been deluded; to part with thy God, and all thy good, for a thing so base, so vile, so empty, so filthy, so short, so foolish, and miserable; and accompanied with so much remorse, with so much danger, and with so much falsehood and deceit. O poor soul, reflect for once, what thou hast been, and what thou now art. Thou wast a child of God: thou art now a slave of satan. Thou wast a favourite of heaven; thou art now an enemy. Thou wast the temple of the Deity; thou art now possessed by the devil. Thou wast most beautiful, like an Angel: thou art now ugly and abominable, like one of the infernal spirits. Heaven was thine, God himself was thine: thou standest now condemned to hell; there is but a hair's breadth betwixt thee and a miserable eternity. Ah! lament, weep, and mourn to see this unhappy change: bewail thy past folly and madness, in making so wretched a bargain:

bargain : and spare no pains, to rectify it out of hand by a speedy and effectual return to God.

Consider thirdly, the ingratitude, the perfidiousness, the gross injury and contempt, the high treason against the divine Majesty ; which the soul is guilty of, when she falls from God into mortal sin. She is *ungrateful*, beyond all that can be expressed, by making so wretched a return to him that gave her her very being ; to him that loved her from all eternity : that employed his whole life 'upon earth in seeking her salvation, and died upon the cross for the love of her. She is *perfidious* by breaking her baptismal vows. She offers an unparalleled *injury* to God in turning her back upon him, and in preferring sin and Satan, and every empty toy before him. Her *contempt* of his divine Majesty is manifested by her defiling his temple, driving him thence, to make room for the devil, and violating his eternal law : And her *high treason* appears in her unnatural rebellion against that great king, her fighting under the standard of the devil, and crucifying the Son of God. O what a dreadful complication of all the worst of evils is found in every mortal sin.

Conclude thou, my soul, to repent, and confess all thy past guilt in this kind : and fully to determine, come what will come, never more to incur so great an evil for the future.

Patér. Ave.

MEDITATION VI.

On the heinous enormity of mortal sin.

1. **C**ONSIDER what a monster mortal sin is. Its malice is infinite; in as much as it is infinitely opposite to God, who is infinitely good. As none but God himself can fully comprehend his own infinite goodness, so none but God himself can perfectly comprehend the infinite enormity that is found in this opposite evil. And as God essentially loves himself with an infinite love and cannot cease to love himself: so he essentially hates mortal sin with an infinite hatred; and cannot cease to hate it, wherever he sees it. It is a monster more hideous than hell, more filthy and abominable than the devil: seeing it was the parent both of hell and the devil: For hell was made for mortal sin: and the devil was an angel, till he was transformed into a devil by mortal sin. O dreadful poison, that could thus in an instant change Angels into devils! O dreadful stain that can nourish an eternal fire! And how has my God borne with me so long under so many mortal sins? How shall I presume to lift up my eyes to heaven after so much guilt!

2. Consider the enormity of mortal sin from the judgments God has exercised of old, does now daily, and will to all eternity exercise upon those that are guilty of it. Witness the irrevocable condemnation of millions of Angels for

one sin in thought: witness the dreadful consequences, both in time and eternity, of the sin of our first parents: witness the sweeping away at once all mankind; for sin, by the waters of the deluge: witness the fire and brimstone rained down upon Sodom and the neighbouring cities; and innumerable other particular judgments inflicted on account of sin; such as plagues, famines, wars, fires, earthquakes, sudden and unprovided deaths, &c. witness the eternal flames, and never-dying worm of hell, to which a just God, who can punish no one beyond what he has deserved, daily condemns thousands for mortal sin. O dreadful evil which provokes a God, whose very nature is goodness and mercy, to this eternal indignation! No wonder then that sin, in the very moment it is committed, makes such a dismal havock in the soul: robs it of all its treasures; of all the merit of its past good works; of all true peace, joy, and comfort; deprives it of its true life, which is its God; betrays and delivers it up to satan, and exposes it every moment to the evident danger of a *second and eternal death*. Ah! my soul, how often has this been thy case? Is it not thy case at present? O make haste while thou hast time, to turn to him, and sue for his mercy, with an humble and contrite heart, who alone can deliver thee from all thy sins, and all the dreadful consequences of them.

3. Consider, that nothing more demonstrates the enormity of sin, and the hatred God bears

to it, than the consideration of what the Son of God himself suffered for our sins; and that the justice of God would not admit of any lower price for our redemption, or any less atonement for our guilt, than the last drop of the blood of his own Son. Contemplate, my soul, this innocent lamb of God, agonizing in the garden, under the load of thy sins, and bewailing them, with tears of blood, gushing out from all his body; see him betrayed, apprehended, bound, condemned, buffeted, spit upon, rent and torn with whips and scourges; crowned with sharp thorns, loaded with a rough and heavy cross, and nailed to it for thy sins: See him bleeding, expiring, and dying for thy sins. And learn from hence how heinous thy sins are in the sight of God; which were not to be expiated but with so many sufferings, and so much blood of his own beloved Son: though every suffering of his, and every drop of his blood was of infinite value, by reason of the infinite dignity of his person. Surely hell itself, with all its dreadful and everlasting torments, does not half so much declare the hatred God bears to sin, as the sight of a God crucified for the expiation of sin.

Conclude utterly to renounce, and abhor all mortal sin for the time to come, more than hell itself; to fly all the approaches of it, and the dangerous company, and other occasions, that may expose thee to it: and as for thy past guilt, to go every day of thy life, in spirit, to the feet of Christ, with Magdalen, there to bewail, and
confess

confess all thy treasons and abominations; and to beg to be cleansed from them all with his precious blood. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION VII.

On the multitude of our sins.

1. **C**ONSIDER, O my soul, how long it is since thou wast first so miserable as to fall from God by sin; and how much thy sins have been multiplied since that unhappy hour. Alas! didst thou not, at thy first coming to the use of reason, forfeit thy baptismal innocence; and fall a prey to that hellish monster? It was thy indispensable duty, in consequence of thy creation, redemption, and baptismal engagements, as soon as thou wast capable of knowing God, to turn towards him, as thy first beginning and thy last end; and to dedicate thyself eternally to his love and service. But didst not thou rather, like Lucifer and his companions, from the first dawning of thy reason, turn thy back upon thy God, and prefer thy own irregular inclinations, and every toy before him? And what was this but joining with the angels that fell, in their rebellion against God?

2. Consider, how after so wretched a beginning, thou hast gone on, daily adding sin to sin, against God, against thy neighbour, against thyself; by work, by word, or by desire: so that not one day, no not one hour, has passed,

without frequently offending God, by commission, or omission. Is it not true, my soul, that even from thy childhood, thou wast given to lies, passion, and impurity? Is it not true that even then thy thoughts went continually astray from God after fooleries and vanities; that thy prayers were without attention; thy confessions without sincerity, repentance or amendment; and thy whole life and conversation without God, or any real good. And didst thou grow any better as thou grewest older? Or didst thou not rather multiply thy sins; and daily more and more corrupt, violate, and defile all thy powers and faculties, and all thy senses and members with repeated offences and treasons: and ungratefully pervert and abuse all the gifts of God against the giver. O! pass over in thy mind (but let it be *in the bitterness of thy soul*) all thy years: and lament and see that thy sins exceed in number the hairs of thy head, yea the sands of the sea: besides an infinite multitude of hidden sins and ignorances which are removed out of thy sight. O! make haste, now at least in this time of mercy, to run and wash thyself clean from all thy filth in the fountains of the wounds of thy Saviour.

3. Consider (in order to know better the boundless number of thy sins) how little thou hast complied, in any part of life, with the great duty of loving God with thy whole heart, of dedicating thy hours to his service, and directing, by a pure intention, all thy thoughts, words, and
actions

actions to him: How little restraint thou hast put upon thy natural inclinations, too too strongly bent on evil; how little guard upon thy roving thoughts; how little attention not to offend in words; or give occasion to sin in others. Reflect also how much of thy precious time thou hast squandered away: how many graces thou hast received in vain: how little thou hast corresponded with divine inspirations: what use thou hast made of the talents, with which thou hast been intrusted, and of the sacraments thou hast received: how thou hast discharged thyself of the duties of thy state, of thy stewardship with regard to thy worldly substance, &c. And see what armies of sins will presently rise up before thy face and stand against thee. Besides that ingratitude for all God's benefits, which thou hast been daily guilty of; and which is an aggravating circumstance of all the rest of thy sins. And how wilt thou dare, after so much guilt, once to lift up thy eyes to heaven; or so much as to name the holy name of God which thou hast so often profaned?

Conclude, like the penitent *Thais*, to have always before thy eyes the multitude and enormity of thy sins, and like her to be ever calling for mercy with a contrite and humble heart.

Pater. Ave.

MEDITATION VIII.

On the goodness of God in waiting for sinners, and inviting them to return to him.

1. **C**ONSIDER the wonders of God's goodness in his dealings with sinners. See with what patience he bears with them, and that very often, for a long time; notwithstanding their repeated provocations, their continual abuse of all his bounty and mercy, and that infinite hatred which he always bears to mortal sin, wherever he sees it. O, my soul, how much art thou indebted to this patience of thy God; in bearing with thee, all these years past, ever since thy first fall into sin! Alas! hast thou not all this time been playing upon the brink of that dreadful precipice, which conducts to the bottomless pit? hast thou not been all this while within a hair's breadth of a miserable eternity? Is it not true that every night thou hast gone to bed, thou didst not know but that before the morning thou mightest find thyself in hell? Millions have fallen into that dismal dungeon of endless wo, whilst thy God hath spared thee: millions are burning in those unquenchable flames for fewer sins than thou hast committed. O! blessed be the infinite goodness of my God to all eternity; and may all his Angels and Saints praise and glorify

glorify him for ever ; for having endured me so long ; for having preserved me, and continually watched over me ; or else my soul had long since dwelt in hell.

2. Consider the many ways by which God seeks to reclaim sinners, and to call them home to him. Reflect on the remorsees and inward reproaches of conscience with which he visits them ; the terrors of his judgments, and the allurements of his mercies, which he sets before them. See how he is continually calling upon them by his word, by his preachers, by good books, good examples, and wholesome admonitions ; and by a number of interior invitations and graces. Has he not dealt thus with thee, my soul, all this time thou hast been going astray from him ? And what is the meaning of all this goodness of thy God to such an undeserving, ungrateful and obstinate rebel ? Why, it is nothing else but his own pure mercy and love, in consideration of the blood of his Son. And shall not all this love soften thy heart, and oblige thee now at least to resolve in good earnest to return to him ; lest otherwise mercy so long abused give place to justice : and the land, which has been so often watered with rain from heaven, and still continues to bring forth nothing but thorns and briars, should fall at length under a dreadful curse, and be condemned to the fire ? *Heb. vi.*

3. Consider what encouragement God gives to sinners, to return to him. *As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a sinner : but that*
he

he may be converted from his ways, and may live. O why will you die, O house of Israel. Ezech. xxxiii. Return to me and live. chap. xviii. Thou hast gone astray after many lovers, but return to me, and I will receive thee. Jeremias iii. See with what love the good shepherd in the gospel goes after the lost sheep ; and with what joy he lays it upon his shoulders, and brings it home to the fold. See how the father runs out to meet the prodigal child, when he returns home from the husks of the swine ; see how he embraces him, cloaths him with the best robe, and makes a feast for him. *Luke xv.* Reflect how the Son of God, when here upon earth, treated the penitent Magdalen, the thief upon the cross, and all other sinners that had recourse to his mercy : And how he has declared that there is more joy in heaven over one penitent sinner, than over ninety nine just. O my soul, let us have recourse to this mercy : let us return to so good a Father, to so loving a Saviour : and let all heaven rejoice in our conversion.

Conclude to abuse no longer the mercies of God, by continuing in sin ; but to return to him now, and never to depart from him any more.

Pater. Ave.

MEDITATION IX.

On the virtue of penance.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that *penance*, in as much as it is a virtue by which the soul turns from sin to God, is and always was *absolutely* necessary for every one that is unhappily fallen from God by actual sin; so that without it no such sinner ever did, ever could, or ever shall find mercy with God. *Aut pœnitendum aut ar-dendum.* One of the two the sinner must choose, either penance or hell-fire. For the Son of God himself has assured us, that *without penance we shall all perish.* Luke. iii. 3, 5. Hence it was by preaching of *penance*, and of the *bringing forth worthy fruits of penance*, that St. John Baptist prepared the people for Christ, *Matt. iii.* and our Lord himself opened his mission by the same theme, *Matt. iv.* This was the great subject of the preaching of the prophets, in the old testament; of the apostles in the new; and of all others, whom God has at any time sent to preach to his people; their commission ever was to invite, to call, to press sinners to turn from their evil ways to God, by a sincere conversion and penance. Now this is the great business of this present jubilee: this conversion and penance is the very foundation, that must be laid, in order to receive the benefit of it. O my soul, do not thou neglect this solemn call: Let not this favourable occasion be lost to thee:
Receive

Receive not this great *grace in vain*: It may be the last of this nature that God will ever favour thee with.

2. Consider, that as in mortal sin there are *two great evils*, viz. the turning away from a God infinitely good, the very fountain of goodness and life; and the embracing in his stead that infernal monster sin; by the allurements of some false appearance of worldly honour, interest or pleasure: so in the virtue of *penance* there are two principal ingredients, viz. the turning away from sin with horror, detestation and sorrow, for having offended a God, infinitely good in himself, and infinitely good to us; and returning back to God, with a thorough change of heart, a sincere resolution of a new life, and a full determination of dedicating the years that remain of life to obedience, service and love. O happy *penance*! O blessed virtue, that makest so wonderful a change in the soul; that drivest away from us the devil and sin: and bringest us back to God! O my soul, embrace this lovely virtue.

3. Consider that another necessary ingredient of the virtue of *penance*, in order to reconcile such sinners to God as have unhappily lost, by mortal sin, the grace they received at the font, is a sincere and effectual resolution of making satisfaction to divine justice; by punishing their sinful flesh, and revenging the cause of God upon their guilty selves; and by that means applying to their souls the satisfaction of Christ. Hence we read so often in the Scriptures, of *turning to God with fasting, weeping,*

weeping, and mourning; of doing penance in sackcloth and ashes, and the like. Hence the ancient penitents so often went through seven, ten or fifteen years of rigorous penances for one mortal sin. Hence so many religious men and women, and other true penitents to this day, addict themselves, during life, to a variety of penitential exercises, in satisfaction for their sins. For this desire of satisfying divine justice, by punishing the sinner, is inseparable from that hatred and detestation of sin, which is the very soul of the virtue of penance. O my soul, what penance hast thou done for thy manifold crimes? Hast thou ever yet sufficiently shewed the sincerity of thy repentance and conversion by *bringing forth worthy fruits of penance.* O take heed, lest if thou forget this indispensable duty of a penitent, thou find one day that thou hast deceived thyself, and that all thy sins are still upon thee.

Conclude *to flee from the wrath to come* by running now to the virtue of penance, and to embrace henceforward a penitential life: to go daily in spirit to the feet of Christ, with Magdalen; and there to bewail thy sins: to offer him every day thy heart and soul, to be for ever his; and not to let a day pass without offering him some penitential satisfaction for thy past offences.

Pater. Ave.

MEDITA-

MEDITATION X.

On the sacrament of penance.

1. **C**ONSIDER that besides the virtue of penance, the sinner that has lost his baptismal-grace, must have recourse also to the sacrament of penance, as to a plank after shipwreck; which is no less necessary after mortal sin, for delivering the soul from the second death, than baptism itself is for those that have not yet been regenerated by water and the Holy Ghost. This sacrament, besides the virtue of penance, which it includes, or presupposes, implies moreover the sinner's confession, and the priest's absolution, pronounced by virtue of a commission from him to whom *all power is given in heaven and earth*; and who has been pleased to impart this power to his disciples and their lawful successors: to whom he has said, *St John xx. As my Father sent me even so I send you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven to them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.* Bless thy Lord, my soul, who has been pleased to leave in his church this sacrament of reconciliation; this wholesome medicine for all thy diseases; this salve, made up with the precious blood of Christ, to heal all thy wounds; this sovereign restorative of life. Resolve to have proper recourse to it at this time of mercy.

2. Consider, that if thou desirest to partake of the grace of the sacrament of penance, in the
remission

remission of thy sins; thou must take care to be duly prepared for this sacrament; by fervent prayer, by a serious and diligent examination into the true state of thy conscience; and above all by a hearty contrition and sorrow for thy sins; joined with a firm resolution of a new life: This is what thou must labour to procure as well by fervent and repeated prayers, as by meditations upon the most moving truths: even such as may effectually excite in thee both the fear and love of God. Without this care in preparation, and contrition, instead of obtaining the forgiveness of thy sins; thou wilt be in danger of adding to the number of them the guilt of a most grievous sacrilege, by the abuse of so great a sacrament. O my God, suffer me not to be so unhappy. O forgive me the many times I have incurred so heinous a guilt.

3. Consider, O my soul, what thy confessions have hitherto been; what preparation hast thou made for them? what contrition hast thou carried with thee to this tribunal of Jesus Christ? Has thy heart been ever truly changed? Has any remarkable amendment of life followed thy confessions? Hast thou been sincere in accusing thyself of thy sins? Has not fear or shame prevailed upon thee to conceal or disguise them? Has not pride or self-love imposed upon thee so far as to make thee ingenious in deceiving thyself, and persuading thyself that those things were not sins, or but venial, which thou wast either ashamed to confess, or unwilling to leave? And will this

false conscience stand its ground when death shall stare thee in the face? will it endure the tribunal of an all-seeing Judge? Consider also whether thy confessions have been accompanied with the restitution of ill-gotten goods; satisfaction for injuries; reconciliation with thy enemies; putting away from thee the immediate occasions of thy sins; such as bad company, dangerous familiarities, conversation with such persons as allure thee to evil, lewd or profane books, indulging an idle life? &c. Or hast thou ever seriously thought of the obligation of these things? And yet without a serious determination to comply out of hand with all these duties, thy confessions were good for nothing; thy absolutions were null and sacrilegious.

Conclude now at least to rectify all that has been amiss: and to prepare thyself to make such a confession now as thou wouldst be glad to make if thou wert sure to appear on the same day before the judgment-seat of Christ. And if, upon advising with thy director, thou find that there is no dependance to be made upon thy past performances, resolve upon a good general confession, to clear up thy accounts once for all. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION XI.

On the evil of the delay of repentance.

- I. **C**ONSIDER the dreadful *danger* the sinner is exposed to, all the time he remains under the guilt of mortal sin: Alas the sword

sword of the divine justice, which is infinitely provoked by impenitence, is every moment hanging over his head, and just ready to fall upon him: the judgments of God threaten him on all sides: hell below opens wide her jaws to devour him: the devil waits but for the beck of the great Master of life and death to destroy him, and carry him away: and all this while he is hanging over a bottomless pit of unquenchable fire, supported only by a slender thread of a brittle uncertain life: which is in the hands of that God, whom he has made his enemy, and who has an infinite hatred for his sins. Ah! my soul, is not this thy case at present? O open thy eyes, and see the dangers that surround thee; and make haste to return to God whilst thou hast time; or very quickly there will be no time for thee. Give ear to the admonition of the Spirit of God by the mouth of the wise man (*Ecclesiasticus* v. 8, 9.) *Delay not to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day: for his wrath will come on a sudden; and in the time of vengeance he will destroy thee.* Alas! has it not been so with millions? Yea thousands of millions are now burning in hell, who no more designed to go thither than thou dost at present; but by putting off their repentance and conversion, they provoked God to cut them off in their sins; and to cast them into that dismal pit, *where the worm never dies, and the fire is never extinguished.*

2. Consider the *presumption* the sinner is guilty of, in wilfully persisting in sin, upon the confidence of a future conversion. Alas! the time to come

is not at our disposal : we cannot promise ourselves one hour of it. And God (who alone is the Master of it) so far from promising time to such as defer their repentance, has often declared to sinners that he will not give them the time they promise themselves ; but will come upon them *like a thief in the night*, when they least expect him. Much less can they flatter themselves that those *pressing* calls and graces which they have so long despised, and cast behind their back, will be always at their command ; when by their obstinacy and impenitence they have hardened their hearts against them ; and removed God at a distance from them. O sinners, give ear for once to the wisdom of God. *Proverbs i.* O children, *how long will you love childishness, &c. Because I have called, and you have refused to hear. I have stretched out my hand, and you would not regard me. You have despised all my counsels, and neglected my reproofs. Therefore will I also laugh at your destruction, and will mock when that which you feared shall come upon you. Then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear, &c.* Give ear to the prophet *Isaias*, chap. lv. 6. *Seek the Lord while he may be found : call upon him while he is near. Behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation.* *2 Cor. vi. 2.* O let us embrace this present time, this favourable opportunity, the last perhaps that God will offer us.

3. Consider the desperate *folly* and *madness* of such as defer their reconciliation with God to the end of their life, with a formal design of putting a

cheat

cheat upon divine justice, by indulging themselves in sin all their life time, and then thinking of repentance when they can sin no longer. Unhappy wretches! who will find to their cost that *God is not to be mocked. Gal. vi. 6.* The general rule is, *that what a man soweth the same shall he reap:* and as a man lives so shall he die. The death-bed performances of habitual sinners are very little to be relied upon at best; because persons at that time are very unfit for prayer, and incapable of attention to reading or meditating on the great truths which may effectually turn their heart from the affection of sin to the love of God. But as for such as with a premeditated design put off their conversion to the last; it is well if one in ten thousand of them meets even with the poor chance of a death-bed repentance. Such presumptuous sinners, as we daily see, either die suddenly; or, are taken out of their senses before they apprehend their danger: or flatter themselves, or are flattered by those about them, into a conceit that they are not dying, when they are: or (which is the most common of all) as they forget God in their life-time, forget themselves at their death. *O thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgment is right.*

Conclude not to defer even for one day (much less till death) thy reconciliation with God: For even that day may be thy last. Remember that impenitence is the high road to perdition: and that such is the unhappy nature of sin, when not effaced by a speedy repentance, that it makes the poor sinner fall easily again and again, till he contracts a

habit; out of which, too too often he never rises more. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION XII.

On the vanity of all those things that keep the sinner from returning to God.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how truly *vain* all those things are which poor deluded worldlings prefer before their God: mere bubbles, toys and trifles, false appearances, deceitful baits, laid by the enemy to catch their souls; gilded pills that conceal a deadly poison which turns their heads, and lulls them asleep; and makes them imagine, in their dream, that they are great and rich, and wallowing in pleasure. But it is but a deluding dream; which will shortly end: and then these airy shadows will all vanish, and leave both their hands and hearts empty. *O ye children of men, how long will you be in love with vanity, how long will you run after mere lyes and deceit.* Reflect upon those that are gone before you; upon those that have enjoyed the most that this world could afford of honours, riches, and pleasures: and tell me what judgment you think they make of them now: *O they will cry out with Solomon (Ecclesiastes ii. 11.) that in all these things they found nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit.* They will loudly condemn their own folly and madness in setting their hearts upon such toys, to the loss of God and their souls.

2. Consider

2. Consider and take a view of these worldly idols, these honours, these riches, these pleasures; and see with what toil they are acquired; with what cares and fears they are possessed; how easily they are lost; what evils, what slavery they are often exposed to; how short, how unconstant they are; how false and deceitful; how embittered with gall; how mean and unworthy the affections of a christian; how far beneath the dignity of an immortal spirit, made for nothing less than God; and how incapable of giving any solid content or satisfaction to a heart, that can never rest but in its Maker. O how wretchedly miserable are all they who are slaves to things so base, so vile, so filthy, as those are to which worldlings generally sacrifice their all! how wretched is that life that is all spent in weaving cobwebs, in running after butterflies, in catching at shadows! in squandering away those precious hours given to secure to the soul a happy eternity, in dressing out, or pampering a carcase that must quickly be the food of worms: in impertinent amusements, in idle and sinful conversation, in hearkening to scandal; in sitting in taverns or alehouses, in loitering in coffee-houses, in hanging over a pack of cards, in gazing at a set of mimicks, cooped up in a play-house, and such like empty fooleries. Surely such a life must be most irksome and tedious, void of all true content, joy, peace or comfort here, and of all prospect of happiness hereafter.

3. Consider how this folly and misery of worldlings is described by the prophet *Isaias*, chap. lix; where

where he tells them, that they *put their trust in that which is a mere nothing*; that *they speak vanities*; that is, that their whole discourse and conversation is empty, foolish, and nothing to the purpose; that they *conceive labour, and bring forth iniquity*: That they are sitting day and night upon the *eggs of asps* (most poisonous serpents) which if they eat will bring present death; and if they hatch, will turn out serpents and destroy them. That all their works are but spending their bowels in *weaving spiders webs*, which *can never cloth them*; *unprofitable works*, fit for nothing but to catch flies: that *their thoughts and devices are all vain and unprofitable*; and their ways lead to destruction: that they are strangers to the *way of peace*; that *their paths are crooked*: and *there is no judgment in their steps*; and that *whosoever treadeth in them knoweth no peace*. Ah! the wretched choice which blind mortals make, when they turn away from God, after cheating vanities, and lying madneses. O my soul, be thou more wise?

Conclude to despise the world and all its fooleries; and to turn now at least with all thy heart from vanity to truth. *Pater. Ave.*

M E D I T A T I O N XIII.

On the happiness of serving God.

1. **C**ONSIDER these words of the prophet (*I/sai. lli.*) say to the just man: *It is well.* And reflect on the many advantages which this

short

short word *well* comprises and ensures to the just, both for time and eternity. Honour, riches, and pleasure, are the things on which the world sets the greatest value: but they are not to be found where the world seeks them, but only in the service of God. It is a greater *honour* to be a *servant* of God, than to be the emperor of all the earth. What then must it be to be his friend and favourite; to be his spouse, to be his child, to be his temple? Can any worldly honours be compared with these? How glorious a dignity is it to be heir apparent to a heavenly and eternal kingdom: and in the mean time during this mortal pilgrimage to walk and converse with God, to be as familiar as one pleases with this great King, to go into his closet when we will; to have an assurance from him of a favourable audience, of obtaining all requests? &c. How truly honourable to have one's name enrolled in the book of life; one's character established, not in the village of this world (which nevertheless cannot help admiring and esteeming true virtue) but in the great city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem? O my soul, let such honours as these be the only objects of thy ambition.

2. Consider how *rich* the just man is: not always indeed in those worldly possessions, which every accident may take away, and which can never satisfy the heart; but in treasures infinitely more valuable, of virtue, grace, and merit, which all the money in the world is not sufficient to purchase; and which make the soul rich for all eternity. But the servants of God have a far greater treasure

sure than this, viz. God himself; whom the whole world cannot take from them, as long as they take care not to drive him away by wilful sin. *He is their protector and their reward exceeding great.* Gen. xv. He is always with them: He is a tender father to them; the eye of his special providence is ever upon them; his Angels encamp about them, to defend them, and deliver them from evil. In a word, God is all things to them that fear and love him: so that even as to worldly goods, he never forsakes those that do not first forsake him. O my soul, see thou seek no other treasure but him: fear no loss but the losing of him. If thou hast him, nothing can make thee miserable: but without him nothing can make thee happy.

3. Consider the *pleasures* that attend a virtuous life: such as the satisfaction, peace, and joy of a good conscience; the sense that holy souls have of God's goodness and love for them; the experience they have of his sweetness in their recollection and prayer; the consolations of the Holy Ghost; and the ravishing delights they often find in God, as a certain foretaste of the joys of Heaven: the comfortable prospect of a happy eternity after their short mortal pilgrimage; and, in fine, a blessed conformity to the will of God, which sweetens even their very crosses. Such pleasures as these are far beyond all that worldlings can pretend to; pleasures pure and spiritual, which have supported, and even given an inexpressible joy to the martyrs, under the worst of their torments; which have sweetened all the penitential austerities of other saints;

saints; and made them think whole nights too short when spent with God in prayer. O how great then is that error, how pernicious is that deceit, by which satan persuades the children of this world, that there are no pleasures in a virtuous life: whereas indeed there is no true pleasure any where else.

Conclude, since thy whole happiness both for time and eternity depends entirely upon loving and serving God; to set out from this hour in quest of this happiness, by walking in that beautiful path of virtue, which alone can bring thee to it. *Pater. Ave.*

M E D I T A T I O N XIV.

On death.

1. **C**ONSIDER that thy time here will be very short. Ah! whosoever thou art, thou must quickly be gone from hence into another region, a strange and unknown land to thee: and thou must leave thy worldly friends, thy honours, thy riches, and pleasures all behind thee; and thy very body too to be laid under the ground, a prey to worms and maggots. Then all will be over with thee, as to this world: the sun will never more rise to thee: thou wilt have no share in the transactions of the world; no man will fear thy displeasure, nor court thy favour: thy very best friends will quickly forget thee. O why then dost thou not think of this? Why dost thou live as if thou wert to be always here? Why dost thou foolishly imagine that death, which is daily carrying off so many

many of thy neighbours, is still at a distance from thee! O be not so blind! but give ear to the repeated voices of the dead, calling to thee from their silent monuments: Remember what has befallen us; for in like manner it shall be with thee. *It was our turn yesterday: it will be thine to-day.*

2. Consider, that thou canst die but once; and that upon that one moment of death depends an eternity. If thou die well, it will be well with thee for endless ages: but if thou die ill, thou must pass from death to a second death, to the very extremity of misery, without end or remedy. O how hard it is to do that well, which we can do but once: and cannot try or practise beforehand! O my soul, see then thou take care to study well this lesson! O make it the great business of thy life to learn to die well! Remember there is no security against an evil death, but a good life. Every thing else leaves thee exposed to dreadful uncertainties. Especially since thou art quite in the dark, as to the time, and manner, and all the circumstances of thy death; and knowest not whether thou shalt not be snatched away, without any help at all, and when thou least expectest it.

3. Consider the separation which death makes between the soul and body: and how these two hitherto individual companions take now quite different ways. The body quickly becomes a loathsome object, which its dearest friends can scarce endure: and which hastens so fast to corruption, that they are obliged within a few days

to get it out of the house, and lay it deep under ground, that it may not infect the air. And what company does it meet with there, but swarms of maggots and worms? O! remember, man, that *thou art dust, and into dust thou shalt return.* O reflect what will very quickly be the end of this fading beauty of the body which so often allures thee to sin! But which way does the soul take when she leaves the body? what company does she presently meet with in the region of spirits? what horrors and terrors at the sight of the devils, and the violent attempts they then make upon her? what dreadful apprehensions of the judgment and the sentence that is immediately to pass upon her? How gladly would she then be rid of that viper's brood of her own sins; with which she sees herself surrounded, and which cry aloud for justice against her? O my soul, think well on these things whilst thou hast time: and prevent the dismal consequences of leaving them to be thought of when it shall be too late.

Conclude to *set thy house in order* now by a serious examination of the state of thy soul, and by rectifying all that has hitherto been amiss, by penance, and a new life. O! never venture to live one day in that state in which thou wouldst not dare to die! *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION XV.

On the sentiments of the soul at the approaches of death.

1. **C**ONSIDER how different a judgment the soul will make of all things, at the approaches of death, from that which she is apt to make in life: How the *world* will then turn upside down before her eyes. Ah! my soul, how wilt thou then despise all worldly honours and preferments, when thou shalt see thyself at the brink of the grave, where the worms will make no distinction between the king and the beggar! How little account wilt thou then make of the praise, esteem, or love of men, who will now think no more of thee! How wilt thou then undervalue thy riches, when thou shalt see them slipping away from thee, and leaving thee nothing but a coffin and a shroud! How despicable will all worldly pleasures appear in thy eyes, which at the best could never give thee true satisfaction; and now shew what they are, and turn into smoke. O let us make the same judgment now concerning all these things as we shall do then! let us weigh them all in these scales, and we shall not be cheated. For why should we set our affections upon such short-lived slippery toys? why should we admit of a love that cannot stand the test of death?

2. Consider

2. Consider, O my soul, what will then be thy sentiments with regard to thy *sins*; of which thou hast hitherto perhaps made but small account. O how hideous, how odious will they then appear to thee! how numerous, how enormous! O what anguish! what remorse! what dread! what confusion! what despair, will invade a poor sinner at that hour, when he shall see before his eyes such armies of sins set in array against him, appearing all now in their own ugly and monstrous shapes, which he had never remarked before; and assailing him with their united forces! Will he not then begin sensibly to feel the gripes of that never-dying worm, which is one of the worst of the torments of hell? Will he not then lamentably cry out; *Ab! the sorrows of death have encompassed me; and the perils of hell have found me. Psalm cxiv.* On the other hand, how beautiful then will the way of virtue appear in his eyes! O how will he wish to have followed that charming path! But alas! time is now no more: He is just now launching forth, with all his evils, into eternity, an immense ocean to whose further shore the poor sailor can never reach; and which he has so much reason to fear will be to him an eternity of wo. *O! let my soul die the death of the just: and let my latter end be like to theirs. Numb. xxiii.*

3. Consider, what will then be the sentiments of the soul with regard to the value of *time*; that precious time which is now so prodigally squandered away. O how will she then wish that

she could bring back any part of the time past! what would she not give for one hour of it? Verily a thousand worlds, if she were mistress of them. But what will her sentiments then be of the value of *grace*? How bitterly will she regret the neglect of so many calls and invitations of her gracious God; the loss of so many favourable opportunities; the abuse of the sacraments; the misemploying so many of God's gifts and talents? Ah! how many great, but ungrateful truths, will then discover themselves to the sinner; against which he had shut his eyes before! How will the false reasonings of the world, the delusions of his own passions, the subtleties of his self-love, the affected ignorances of things he had no mind to know, and all the deceitful pretexts of a false conscience, forsake the sinner at the approaches of death; and leave him in the lurch, at the time of his greatest distress?

Conclude to take up now those sentiments with relation to all these things, that will stand by thee at the hour of thy death. For why shouldst thou any longer suffer thyself to be the dupe of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and give into their impostures, to the eternal loss of thy immortal soul?

Pater. Ave.

MEDITATION XVI.

On judgment.

1. **C**ONSIDER, O my soul, that after thy departure hence, thou wilt be cited to appear at the bar of divine justice; there to give an account of thy whole life; there to be tried; in order to be doomed to life, or death eternal, according to thy works. And hast thou ever seriously thought of this great trial; which is to decide thy lot for eternity? How stands thy account, if this night thou shouldst be called to the bar? It may be thy case: for the *Son of man will come, like a thief in the night*, when least expected. Take care then to be always ready. Ever remember that the eye of him, who is then to be thy judge, is now always upon thee, and that all thy thoughts, words and actions are daily set down in his great book, which will be produced at thy trial.

2. Consider all the circumstances of this judgment: what kind of judge thou art to appear before: by what law thou art to be tried: who will be thy accuser; who the witnesses: what sentence will be pronounced when the trial is over. The *judge* is a God from whom nothing can be hid: a God whom none can resist: a God from whose judgment none can appeal: a God of infinite purity, *in whose sight the very heavens are not clean*: a God of infinite sanctity,

who hates iniquity with an infinite hatred : a God infinitely just, who has by an eternal decree fixed this just rule, that after giving us *our day* in this world for obtaining mercy, he will take *his day* in the next life to *judge every man according to his works*. The *law* by which we shall be tried will be the commandments of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ : Our *accusers* will be the devils, and the accomplices of our crimes : especially such as we have drawn into sin ; the blood of whose souls will cry out for vengeance against us : The *witnesses* will be our own guilty consciences : And the *sentence* will be an unchangeable, irrevocable, eternal doom either to heaven or hell. O my soul, see thou never forget these truths. Let thy whole life be a preparation for this great trial.

3. Consider what an account will be then demanded of thy stewardship. Thou wilt be examined how thou hast discharged thyself of every branch of thy duty both in general, and in particular, to God, to thy neighbour, and to thyself ? How thou hast employed thy time ? What use thou hast made of the talents God entrusted thee with ? in what manner thou hast corresponded with the graces thou hast received ? what profit thou hast reaped from the sacraments, from the word of God, from the favourable circumstances in which God has placed thee ? &c. There the whole history of thy life, all thy hidden sins, all thy sins of commission or omission, even to every idle word, and every thought
and

and motion of thy heart, shall be exposed in their true light. Thy very good works shall be nicely sifted, and weighed in the unerring balance of the sanctuary: in which the works that are most admired by deluded mortals are often found to be of no weight at all. O my poor soul, what shalt thou be able to answer under so strict an examination? How shalt thou endure the dreadful sight of so many sins as shall then appear against thee? In what wretched plight shalt thou stand before the just judge? which way shalt thou look for relief or comfort? *O! enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord: for no man living shall be justified in thy sight.*

Conclude to judge thyself now, and condemn thyself to a life of penance; that the judgment of God may spare thee hereafter. Make thyself now a provision of good works, which may stand by thee then, when all things else shall leave thee. Follow the advice of him that is to be thy judge, *Luke xxi. 36. Watch ye, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and stand before the Son of man. Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION XVII.

On the great accounting day.

1. **C**ONSIDER that after many dreadful signs and presages, which shall cause men to pine away with fear and anguish, a day shall come on a sudden that shall put an end to this world, and all these painted toys that the world so much admires. A fire raging like a torrent shall sweep off, and consume all it shall find upon the whole face of the earth, and reduce all to ashes. Where then, worldlings, will be your state and pomp; your palaces and gardens; your plate and jewels, your honours, riches, and pleasures, and whatsoever else you seem to possess in *this dream* of your mortal life? Alas! all these things at last must end in smoke, and when you wake you shall *find nothing in your hands*. *Psf. lxxv. O that men would be wise, and would understand, and would look forward upon their last things. Deut. xxxii. O my soul, do thou at least learn to be wise, and instead of setting thy heart upon these worldly bubbles, lay up thy treasure in heaven: there alone it will be out of the reach of this last fire.*

2. Consider, how at the voice of the Archangel with the last trumpet: *Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment*; all the children of Adam, from the first to the last, shall by the almighty power of God be raised in an instant from death

to life : and every soul shall be united again to its own body, never more to part for eternity. But O the immense difference between the bodies of the just, and of the wicked, perfectly suitable to their respective merits ! The one shall be more bright and glorious than the sun ; the other most hideous, loathsome, and abominable. Then all this vast assembly shall go forth to meet the great judge : and *every eye shall see him coming down from heaven with great power and majesty* ; armed with all the terrors of his justice ; and environed with all his heavenly legions. Before him shall be carried the royal standard of his cross, shining more bright than the sun, to the great comfort of the good, and the intollerable anguish and confusion of the wicked, for having made so little advantage of the unspeakable benefit of their redemption. Then, at the command of the judge, the good shall be in an instant separated from the bad, and placed at his right hand ; and all the bad, with the devils who deceived them, shall be driven to the left. O ! everlasting separation, after which these two companies shall never meet. And hast thou, my soul, ever well considered the part thou art to act in this last scene ? What provision dost thou make for this great appearance ? With what eyes couldst thou look upon the judge ? In which of these two companies dost thou expect to be placed ? O hearken now to the summons of the great trumpet of the gospel, calling thee from the death of sin to the life of grace : secure now to thyself a part in

in the first resurrection: keep now thy body and soul pure from sin: attend continually in spirit upon him that is to be thy judge; embrace his cross by a penitential life: fly from the midst of this Babylon of the world, and its wicked company and conversation: and thou shalt have nothing to fear at that day.

3. Consider how mean a figure the grandees, the rich, the worldly wise, the valiant heroes, the celebrated beauties of this world shall make in that confused multitude at the left hand of the judge. What will their sentiments be then of all those worldly advantages? How will they wish a thousand and a thousand times, they had been always little and contemptible in this life, poor, meek, and humble; when they shall see such as these, whom heretofore they so much despised, now crowned with glory and dignity, strength and beauty; and advanced to a kingdom of never-ending bliss? But how insupportable will the confusion of the wicked be when the books of consciences shall be laid open; and all the guilt of their whole lives exposed to the publick view of that great assembly of the whole universe; visible and evident to the eyes of all both angels and men, good and bad? Ah! poor sinner, where wilt thou then hide thy head? What shame, what anguish will oppress thee, when all thy crimes and abominations, all thy works of darkness, which thou imaginedst would never be known, and which perhaps thou couldst not find in thy heart to disclose, even to one person, tied by all laws to a perpetual secrecy, shall be displayed before thy face, with all
their

their aggravating circumstances, in this great consistory of the whole universe? But how wilt thou endure the angry countenance of the judge? How wilt thou bear the just reproaches he will then make thee? How wilt thou call upon the mountains to fall upon thee, and to hide thee from his wrath, which will be as insupportable to thee as hell itself?

Conclude to take such measures now in *this thy day*, as may effectually secure thee against all this scene of confusion and irremediable woe in the day of the Lord. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION XVIII.

On the last sentence of the good and bad.

I. **C**ONSIDER that these last great affairs will be concluded by a definitive sentence: by which the just, after a glorious rehearsal of all their good works, shall be called up to a kingdom, where sorrows never enter, and joys never end; but the wicked shall be condemned to the dungeon of *everlasting fire*. Give ear, my soul, in spirit to that sweet and amiable invitation (which thou hopest shall be one day thine) by which thy dear Lord shall call his servants, his friends, and his children into the happy mansions of bliss: *Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* *Matt. xxv.* O come from the vale of tears to the ravishing joys of my heavenly paradise: come from a tedious banishment to your true country, your blessed

bleſſed home, in the fair and lovely manſions of the eternal Sion. *Come, enter into the joy of your Lord*; the kingdom prepared for you, where you ſhall find all that poſſibly can be deſired, all united together, an univerſal bleſſing for endleſs ages. O happy invitation! O my ſoul, do thou aſpire always after this happineſs. *I have rejoiced*, ſaid the royal prophet, *Pſ. cxxi. at the things that have been ſaid to me: We ſhall go into the houſe of the Lord.*

2. Conſider, with fear and trembling, the dreadful ſentence that ſhall paſs upon the wicked. *Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels, Matt. xxv.* O weigh well every word of this frightful ſentence. *Depart, go, be gone for ever from me*; far from the joys of my kingdom, and the ſociety of my children, into the place you have blindly preferred before heaven; the darkſome dungeons of hell below, which were prepared for ſatan and his associates, whoſe part you have taken againſt me. O terrible excommunication, to be cut off for ever from the ſociety of Jeſus Chriſt and his ſaints! O cruel divorce; to be eternally ſeparated from God and all that is good! O diſmal, and everlaſting baniſhment from the city of God above into the low and horrid region of the ſecond death! Ah! wretches who make ſo little now of loſing your God, by mortal ſin, what will you then think when you ſhall be doomed to this eternal ſeparation from the ſource of all good? But whither are you to go from him? Alas! *into everlaſting fire*, there to burn as long as God is God, in the company *of the devil and his angels.* O dreadful eternity!

3. Conſider

3. Consider that terrible and universal *curse*, which this sentence of condemnation involves. *Depart from me, ye cursed*, says the sovereign Judge: as if he should say, You shall go from me, but take my *curse* along with you. I would have given you my *blessing*; but you would not receive it: a *curse* you have chosen; and a *curse* shall be your everlasting lot. It shall stick close to you, like a garment, which you shall never put off; it shall enter into your very bowels; and search into the very marrow of your bones. A *curse* upon your eyes, never to see the least glimpse of comfortable light: a *curse* upon your ears, to hear no other musick for all eternity but frightful shrieks and groans: a *curse* on your taste, to be for ever embittered with the gall of dragons: a *curse* on your smell, to be always tormented with the intolerable stench of the bottomless pit: a *curse* on your feeling, and on all the members of your body, to be ever burning and never consume, in a fire that shall not be quenched: a *curse* upon your understanding, never to be enlightened with any ray of truth: a *curse* upon your will, never to attain to any thing that it loves and desires, but always to be bound down to what it hates and abhors: a *curse* upon your memory, to be ever revolving, in the bitterness of a fruitless repentance, the folly and vanity of those short-lived pleasures and worldly toys, for which you have forfeited heaven; a *curse* upon your conscience, to be ever gnawed by the worm that never dies: a *curse* upon your whole soul, to be a

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hell

hell to itself, ever torn in pieces with most violent passions of fury, envy, hatred and despair. Good God! let it never be my misfortune to incur this dreadful and irrevocable curse. But see how this sentence is no sooner pronounced, but the earth opens, and swallows down at once all this wretched multitude, with the devils that seduced them, into the lowest hell: and then the gate is shut upon them; never, never to be opened. O the fatal consequences of worldly pride! O the dismal end of carnal pleasures!

Conclude to turn now to God with thy whole heart; and henceforward to stick close to him: so shalt thou secure to thyself a blessing at the last day.

Pater. Ave.

MEDITATION XIX.

On Hell.

1. **C**ONSIDER that it will be of no small service to keep thee from going down into hell after death, if thou wilt now, by a serious meditation, go down thither whilst thou art alive, and take a full view of that wretched place by the help of those lights, which the unerring word of God and the writings of the saints will furnish thee with. These will shew thee some part at least of the many miseries which hell involves. “ A dying
“ life, or rather a living death: a darksome pri-
“ son, a loathsome dungeon; a binding hand and
“ foot in eternal chains; a land of horror and mi-
“ sery; a lake of fire and brimstone; a bottomless

“ pit

" pit, devouring flames ; a serpent ever gnaw-
 " ing ; a worm that never dies ; a body always
 " burning, and never consumed ; a feeling always
 " fresh for suffering ; a thirst never extinguished ;
 " perpetual weeping, wailing and gnashing of
 " teeth ; no other company but devils and dam-
 " ned wretches ; all hating and cursing one ano-
 " ther ; all hating and cursing God ; spirits always
 " in an agony, and sick to death ; yet never
 " meeting with that death, that they so much
 " desire ; cast forth from the face of God, into the
 " land of oblivion ; hated and abhorred by God
 " and his saints ; having none to comfort them,
 " none to pity them ; wounded to the heart
 " with the sense of lost happiness ; and op-
 " pressed with the feeling of present misery.
 " And all these sufferings everlasting, without
 " the least hope of end, intermission, or remissi-
 " on. " Such is hell according to the scripture
 and the uniform doctrine of the saints. Such is
 that bitter cup of which *all the wicked of the*
earth must drink. Ps. lxxiv.

2. Consider, that in hell every vice will meet
 with its peculiar torment. There the proud shall
 be debased and confounded, and troden under foot
 by insulting devils. There the covetous and the
 lovers of this world shall groan under the extre-
 mity of want and misery : there the lascivious
 shall exchange their dark and filthy pleasures for
 stinking sulphur and black flames : there the former
 objects of their lusts, and the partners of their
 crimes, shall torture them more than the very de-
 vils : There gluttons and drunkards shall be

oppressed with an insupportable hunger and thirst; and shall not be able to obtain so much as one drop of water to cool their tongue. There every sense shall have its hell. The eyes shall be condemned to perpetual darkness; to a gloomy region, where no sun, no moon, no stars appear; to a dismal night which knows no morning; to a black fire, which affords no light, except it be to discover to those wretches such objects as may serve to torment their sight. The ears shall there be for ever entertained with the melancholy musick of hell, perpetual howlings, groans and shrieks, horrible curses and blasphemies. And so of the other senses. Good God! let my poor soul never experience any part of this misery.

3. Consider, that as among all the bodily senses, the *feeling* is that by which we usually offend the most, so it is the sense which will be the most severely tormented in hell, by a dreadful fire kindled by the breath of an angry God; a fire that shall pierce the damned, through and through, in all their members; that shall penetrate into all their inward parts; and even reach their very souls; a fire that shall prey upon them for ever, without any intermission, and yet never consume, nor stand in need all the while of any other fuel but the eternal stain of sin. Ah! sinners, *which of you all can abide this devouring fire? which of you can endure eternal burning?* If you cannot bear to hold your hand in the flames for one quarter of a minute, why will you be so mad as to be continually exposing yourself by sin to the
evident

evident danger of burning for all eternity, both body and soul, in the merciless flames of hell?

Conclude, seeing thou canst endure so little here, to take the most effectual means thou art able, now whilst thou hast time, to keep thyself from ever coming into this place of torments. The fire of hell can burn nothing but wilful sin. Get rid of this enormous evil, and hell shall have no hold of thee. *Pater. Ave.*

M E D I T A T I O N XX.

On the interior pains of hell.

1. **C**ONSIDER that the fire of hell, with all the rest of the *exterior* torments which the damned must for ever endure in that woful place, are terrible indeed; but no ways comparable to the *interior* pains of the soul. That *pana damni*, or eternal loss of God, and of all that is good; that perpetual sense of this loss; and that extremity of anguish which ever attends it; that rueful remorse, and perpetual gnawing of the worm of conscience; that everlasting rage and despair, that complication of so many other racking tortures in the inward powers and faculties of the soul, are, in the judgment of the divines, torments incomparably greater than any thing that can be suffered in the body. O! it is true that even here the inward pangs of the soul are oftentimes more insupportable than any death whatsoever: how much more will they be so in hell?

2. Consider in particular how much the damned will resent that most dreadful of all evils, viz. their having lost their God. Alas! poor sinners here, while they lie groveling in the mire of the earth, diverted from the thought of God by a thousand impertinences; and yet continually partaking, and that many ways, of his sweetness and goodness, in some or other of his creatures; have little or no idea of what it is absolutely to lose God. But the damned, by their own woful experience, are convinced, now it is too late, that none of all the rest of the torments of hell can be compared with this loss. God is an *infinite good in himself*, and he is the inexhausted *source* of all *our good*, and of every thing that is any ways *good* in his creatures: he is our *universal good*. In losing him then the damned have lost an infinite good; they have lost their first beginning, and their last end; by whom, and for whom they were created: their sovereign good, their universal good, their immense eternal good, the overflowing fountain of all good, their true and only felicity. They have lost him totally: they have lost him irrecoverably: they have lost him eternally. They have lost him in himself, they have lost him in themselves, they have lost him in all his creatures. The lively sense of this irreparable loss, and of all the consequences of it, continually racks their despairing souls: they cannot turn away their thought one moment from it: it gripes them with inexpressible torments. Which ever way

way they turn to seek any one drop of ease or comfort, in him, or from him, they meet with none: all things conspire against them; all things tell them they have lost their God. There is an immense gulf between them and him. They are nailed down, and kept from him, bound fast in eternal chains: and all the efforts of their violent longings after him, only serve to redouble their misery. Ah! sinners, see what it is to lose God eternally: and prevent this last and worst of all evils, by taking care not to lose him now by sin.

3. Consider that never-dying worm of conscience, that perpetually gnaws the souls of the damned: that most bitter, but fruitless repentance; that eternal remorse, which, like a poisonous serpent, makes its way into their very vitals, and continually preys upon them. O how hateful, how abominable does this monster of mortal sin now appear in their eyes: more ugly and filthy than the very dungeons of hell! How much do they now hate and detest their own souls, which they see stained and corrupted, eternally obsessed and possessed by thousands of these hellish monsters. Here comes in the memory of all their past follies; and of the shortness and vanity of all those things, for the love of which they have forfeited heaven, and sold their souls to the devil: Here a dismal and eternal regret for their former stupidity and madness, whilst they are perpetually comparing together time and eternity, past enjoyments and present

present punishments; virtue and vice, heaven and hell: and ever thinking what helps, what opportunities they have had in their life, of making themselves eternally happy at a very easy rate; and how they have neglected them and cast them all behind their backs.

Conclude to look well to the whole state of thy interior now; and to make that choice in time, which thou wilt be glad to have made in eternity. *Pater. Ave.*

M É D I T A T I O N XXI.

On a miserable eternity.

I. **C**ONSIDER, that what above all things makes hell intolerable, is the eternity of its torments. It is this eternity that is an infinite aggravation to all and every one of them: It is this bitter ingredient, which makes every drop of that cup of the divine vengeance, of which all the damned are forced to drink, so insupportable. Were there so much as the least glimpse of hope, that the miseries of the damned would one day have an end; though it were after millions of millions of ages; hell would be no longer hell, because it would admit of some comfort. But for all these inexpressible torments to continue for ever, as long as God shall be God; without the least hopes of ever seeing an end of them; Oh! this it is that is the greatest rack of the damned. O Eternity, Eternity! how little do worldlings apprehend
thee

thee now ! How unwilling are they to believe thee (notwithstanding the exprefs declaration of God's unerring word) for fear thou shouldst put a restraint upon their vicious inclinations ! O ! how terrible wilt thou be to them hereafter, when they shall find themselves ingulfsed in thy bottomlefs abyfs !

2. Consider, if one short night seems fo long and tedious to a poor fick man in a burning fever ; if he tosses and turns, and no where finds reft ; if he counts every hour, and with fo much impatience longs for the morning ; which yet will bring him but little relief or comfort ; what muft this dreadful night of eternity be, accompanied with all both the exterior and interior pains of hell ? No man in his fenfes would purchase a kingdom at the rate of lying for ten years confined to a foft bed, without once coming off. Ah ! what mifery then muft it be to be chained down to a bed of fire, and fuch a fire as that of hell is, with all the reft of its torments, not for ten years only, nor for ten thoufand times ten years ; but for as many hundred thoufand millions of ages, as there are drops of water in the ocean, or atoms in the air ; in a word, for a never-ending eternity ?

3. Consider, in order to frame a better idea of this miserable eternity, what an immense fpace of time would be required, for any one of the damned, if he were to fhed but one tear in a thoufand years, to fhed tears enough to fill the fea. The world has not yet lafted fix thoufand years :

years : so that the first of all the damned would not have shed six tears. And yet, O dreadful eternity ! the time will certainly come, when any one of those wretches may be able with truth to say, that at the rate of one tear for a thousand years, he might have shed tears enough, not only to make a sea ; but to drown the whole world, and to fill up the vast space between heaven and earth. And alas ! after these millions of millions of ages, he shall be as far off from the end of his misery, as he was the first day he came into that place of wo. Compute after this, if thou pleasest, as many hundred thousand millions of years, as thy thoughts can reach to ; suppose, if thou wilt, the whole surface of the earth to be covered with numeral figures ; cast up if thou canst this prodigious sum of years ; and then multiply it by itself, and multiply again a second time the product by itself ; and then at the foot of this immense sum, write down, *Here begins eternity.* O terrible eternity ! is it possible that they who believe thee, should not fear thee ? Is it possible that they who fear thee, should dare to sin ?

Conclude to fly and detest that monster sin, which leads to this miserable eternity. Wash away now all the stains of thy soul in the blood of the lamb, by the means of repentance and confession. Penitential tears are capable of removing those stains at present, which eternal flames hereafter shall never be able to burn away.

Pater, Ave.

M E D I T A

MEDITATION XXII.

On Heaven.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that if God's justice be so terrible with regard to his enemies, how much more will his mercy, his goodness, and his bounty, declare itself in favour of his friends? What then must this blessed kingdom of heaven be, which in his infinite goodness he has prepared for his beloved children? which he has contrived by his infinite wisdom, and effected by his infinite power, for the manifestation of his glory, of his riches, and his magnificence; and for the entertaining them with an eternal banquet, worthy of so great a king: where *they shall be for ever inebriated with the plenty of his house, and made to drink of the torrent of his pleasures; sitting down at the head of the fountain of life,* which is with him, and from him perpetually flows into their happy souls. This happiness is infinitely beyond all that any mortal eye hath ever seen, or ear heard, or heart conceived: A general and universal good, comprizing at once, and for ever, all that is good, filling brim-full the vast capacity of the affections and desires of the soul; and eternally securing from all fear or danger of want or change.

2. Consider the glory and beauty of these lovely mansions of the heavenly Jerusalem: which the Scripture, to accommodate itself to our weakness, represents to us under the figures
of

of such things as we most admire here below : when it tells us, that the walls of this city of God are of precious stones ; and its streets of pure and transparent gold : that these streets are watered with the river of the water of life, resplendent as chrystal, flowing from the throne of God, and that on the banks of the river, on both sides, grows the tree of life. That there shall be no night, nor any want of sun or moon ; but that God himself shall be its everlasting light, &c. How glorious are these things that are said of thee, O city of God ! But how much more glorious are those things that are mystically signified by these figures ! But, O the blessed inhabitants of this heavenly city ! those millions of millions of Angels, Cherubims and Seraphims, all on fire with divine love : that immense multitude of Saints and Martyrs, and other servants of God of both sexes, gathered out of all nations, tribes and tongues ; and above them all the blessed Virgin Mother of God, Queen of Saints and Angels : their number is innumerable. But who can express the happiness of enjoying such blessed company ? They are all most noble, most glorious, most wise, most holy : they are all of blood royal, all children and heirs of the most high God ; all kings and queens ; ever beautiful ; ever young, crowned with wreaths of immortal glory, and shining more brightly than the sun. Their love for one another is beyond what can be conceived : they have all but one heart and one soul ; and take such an inexpressible delight

light in each other's happiness, that the joy and satisfaction of every individual is multiplied to as many fold, as there are blessed souls and Angels in heaven. O Christians, let us aspire after this heavenly Jerusalem ! Let us aspire after this happy society ! O how lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ? O how does my soul long after the courts of the living God !

3. Consider, that although this blessed kingdom abounds with all that can be imagined good and delightful ; yet there is but one sovereign good, in the enjoyment of which consists the essential beatitude of the soul ; and that is God himself ; whom the blessed ever see face to face, and by the contemplation of his infinite beauty, are quite ravished and set on fire with seraphick flames of eternal love ; which by a most pure and amiable union transforms them in a manner into God himself. He surrounds and penetrates them on all sides with unexpressible delight : he fills their whole souls with his divinity, the overflowing source and ocean of all good : He gives himself to be their joy, their treasure, their never-ending bliss . But O that happy eternity which compleats this felicity of the blessed ! And that infallible security they enjoy that their bliss is even linked with God's eternity : and that as long as God shall be God, they shall be happy with him in his heavenly kingdom. O my soul, how pleasant, how delightful it is to look forward into this immense eternity of joys, and there to lose thyself in this most delightful prospect of endless ages !

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Conclude

Conclude to despise all that is earthly and that passes with time; and from this hour to set out, and begin thy journey, towards this glorious, heavenly, and eternal kingdom. There thou shalt find all that thy heart can desire: immortal honours, immense riches, pure and eternal pleasures. There thou shalt meet with beauties never fading, perpetual health, perpetual life, &c. O! this alone is thy true home, the land of the living. *Pater. Ave.*

M E D I T A T I O N XXIII.

On the great commandment of divine love.

I. **C**ONSIDER those words of the divine law. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength,* Mark xii. 30. *This, says our Lord (Matt. xxii. 39.) is the greatest and the first commandment.* It is *the greatest* in its dignity, and its excellence; as tending directly, and immediately to bring us to God himself, and to unite us to him by a happy band of eternal charity: It is *the greatest* in the infinite advantages it brings to our souls; the honour of being friends and favourites of God; the treasures of all other virtues, which ever accompany divine love; the satisfaction of tasting the sweetness of God, and enjoying his company; the ridding us of all our sins, and the perfection of all christianity. O my soul, embrace then this heavenly law of love: and bring all thy powers

and faculties to bow down before it. Give up thy *will* to be for ever a happy servant of divine love: let this holy fire ever burn in thy *heart*, and consume all thy earthly and carnal affections: let thy *understanding* be ever directed by its bright light: let all thy thoughts, and imaginations be recollected by it; let it guide and influence all thy words and actions. O blessed kingdom of divine love, when wilt thou come to me and take full possession of my whole soul?

2. Consider, how just, how reasonable, how necessary it is, that we should love our God with our *whole heart*: our God who made this heart of ours for himself, to be the throne of his love; and who will admit of no rival there. To give it away from him is wronging him of what he claims by a thousand titles, it is the height of injustice. To divide the heart between him and the world, or any creature whatsoever, is a most unreasonable and perverse division: he will admit of no partner in his throne. It is just we should love him with our *whole soul*; by applying and employing all the powers of our souls in his love: because he made these souls of ours, after his own image and likeness, on purpose that they might be wholly dedicated to his love: and he made them in such a manner that nothing else can content or satisfy them. It is highly just we should apply our *whole mind* to this love, and employ our *whole strength* in his service, because he is our first beginning, and our last end; to whom we owe all we have, and all we are; he is

our perpetual lover, our perpetual benefactor, infinitely good in himself, and infinitely good to us. O! who art thou, my God, and who am I, that thou shouldst thus set thy heart upon so mean a thing? and that thou shouldst thus insist upon my loving thee: and threaten me with the worst of evils if I love thee not? Would it not be favour enough to permit thyself to be loved by so inconsiderable a creature? would it not be misery enough, if I loved thee not, being not only permitted, but commanded to love thee?

3. Consider, what this great commandment requires of us. It requires a love of preference, by which we are to give the preference to God before all things else; we must love him above all things. Whosoever loves any thing more than him, is not worthy of him; and is guilty of high treason against him. * Whosoever puts his worldly honour, his sensual pleasures, the gratifying his passions, his own will, his humour, his affection to any thing created, or even the whole creation in balance with him, is not worthy of him; and is guilty of high treason against him. Christians, do we love God with this love of preference; when every punctilio of what we call our honour, when every petty consideration of the world, when every trifling satisfaction takes place of him in our hearts? O who is like to God? or who can be compared with him? Let him then be the Lord and Master of our affections. Let us love our
friends

friends in him, and our enemies for his sake : and whatever else we may lawfully love, let us love it with a due subordination to him, and for his sake. For he loves God too little, says St. *Augustine*, who loves any thing else with him, which he does not love for his sake.

Conclude, my soul, to make it the business of thy life, to labour with all thy power to fulfil this great commandment of divine love. And in order thereto continually beg of God, that he would teach thee to love him. None but he can impart this heavenly love to thee.

Pater. Ave.

MEDITATION XXII.

On the motives we have to love God.

1. **C**ONSIDER how all things invite us to love God : and how all kinds of motives conspire in recommending this love to us, and in pressing and obliging us to it. It is our greatest *honour*, our greatest *interest*, our greatest *pleasure*, it is the source of all our *happiness*, both here and hereafter. The love of God here is the way to heaven ; the love of God hereafter is the essential beatitude of heaven. O ! let us aspire then after this blessed love ; which alone can satisfy our souls ; which alone can bring us to our sovereign good ; which alone can put us in possession of all good ; even of God himself. God has loved us first ; he is our ancient lover :

he is our eternal lover : his thought and heart is always upon us : he is a disinterested lover : a most faithful and most constant lover, whose love never forsakes them that do not first forsake his love. O let us return him love for love. God is our Maker, and our Redeemer : he is the best of Fathers, the best of Friends, the Spouse of our souls : and shall not all these titles oblige us to love him ? Is it possible we should love any thing else comparably to him ?

2. Consider how lovely, how aimable God is in himself, and what infinite charms all center in him, to command our love. His goodness is infinite ; he is the great and sovereign good ; the fountain, the overflowing ocean of all good. His mercy is infinite : his bounty is infinite : his wisdom is infinite : his beauty is infinite : it ravishes all that are so happy as once to see his face ; so that they can never after cease to love him. His truth is infinitely charming : all perfections are infinite in him : no tongue can express, no heart can conceive, the incomprehensible greatness and multitude of his attractions. O, my soul, let him then, as he is in himself, be the great object of thy love. Thou lovest goodness, beauty, and perfection wheresoever thou findest it in his creatures : but all this good that is in them, is all from him, and all quite disappears when compared with his goodness, his beauty, and perfection : the whole creation dwindles into a mere nothing, when God appears in his true light.

3. Consider

3. Consider the benefits, as well general, as particular, that we have received, and daily do receive from God's infinite goodness. He is the author of all our good : our very being, our whole soul and body is his gift. He has preserved us, he has nourished, and cherished us, from the first moment of our conception to this hour : He has watched over us with an incomparable love ; he has defended us from a thousand evils. He has given his Angels a charge over us. He has sent his own Son from heaven for us, to deliver us from sin and hell ; and to bring all mercy, grace, and salvation to us. The whole life of the Son of God was employed in serving us : he suffered the very worst of torments ; he shed all precious blood for the love of us. He has left with us all manner of helps to bring us to his heavenly kingdom : his word, his church, his sacrifice, his sacraments, his body and blood, his graces, his inspirations, &c. He has even then heaped favours upon us and kept us from death and hell, when we were his enemies by mortal sin ; he has waited for us with an infinite patience, he has called us back with an infinite tenderness, he has received us with open arms, when we have returned to him ; and has mercifully overlooked all our follies, all our disloyalties, all our ingritudes and repeated treasons against him : besides many instances of his particular providence, which every one of us has met with in some part or other of our life. And shall not all these, and innumerable other benefits

benefits and favours, oblige us to love him ? Does not the whole creation ; does not heaven and earth, and all that is in them, call upon us to love that God, who made them all, and made them to serve us ; but made us to love him ?

Conclude to hearken to this universal voice by which thou art invited to love God : and to have always before thy eyes the innumerable motives thou hast to love him. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION XXV.

On the means of attaining to the love of God.

I. **C**ONSIDER that as the desire of wisdom is the true beginning of wisdom ; so the first step to the love of God, which is true wisdom indeed, is an earnest desire to love God. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after this heavenly justice, for they shall be filled.* Matt. v. This desire makes us pray fervently, seek incessantly, knock earnestly at the gate of divine love. It makes us rise early in quest of this heavenly wisdom : it makes us glad to part with all things else, that we may purchase this precious pearl ; that we may acquire this incomparable treasure. He that with this desire aspires after divine love, already begins to possess what he desires : and the more he relishes the sweetness of what he begins to possess, the more he aspires after it. So that the great means of learning

learning to love God, is by repeated desires and acts of love, to taste, and see how sweet God is, and how sweet a thing it is to love him.

2. Consider that divine love will not be found by us, nor come and dwell in our souls, if we take no care to keep our inward house clean and pure : *Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.* Matt. v. If we entertain in our Interior disorderly company ; that is, if our heart be set upon worldly vanities, upon Mammon, upon pleasure, upon gratifying ourselves and our irregular inclinations ; divine love will not indure such company : these are idols, which must not, which cannot, stand in the temple of God : our hearts must not be divided, if we aspire after the kingdom of divine love ; which will allow of no rival, no usurper, no rebel in its dominions. The Spouse of divine love must be a *garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up.*

3. Consider, that the great means of attaining to the love of God is the exercise of mental prayer, which employs all the powers of the soul in waiting upon him. Here the memory represents all the motives we have to love him : here the understanding is taught to know him : here the affections of the will are inflamed at his presence. This is the true school of love. O my soul, let us daily frequent it. Join to this great exercise of love, a spirit of recollection ; a sense and remembrance of God's presence ; a frequent calling back the soul to him from all her distractions and evagations ; repeated aspirations

rations and ejaculations of love ; walking with God, like the ancient Saints ; and taking him along with us, wherever we are going, and whatever we are doing. O how happy is that life that is thus dedicated to divine love !

Conclude to embrace all the means that may bring thee to this happiness. Begin now from this hour to set out in quest of this fountain of life : let no opposition of earth or hell discourage thee. Never leave off thy search, till thou come to drink of this heavenly water, which will become in thee a fountain springing up to life everlasting. *Pater. Ave.*

M E D I T A T I O N XXVI.

On the practice and exercise of divine love.

1. **C**ONSIDER that the love of God is a fire which is always in motion, and always tending upwards towards its heavenly element : It expires and dies, if it lies idle. To keep it alive, it must then be nourished by frequent acts of love : not mere verbal acts, by telling God that we love him, whilst our hearts perhaps is far from him : but by the real exercise of the love of God, both in our heart, and in our works. To fulfil this, we must not only aspire after the enjoyment of God, as *our sovereign good*, by a love of *chaste concupiscence*, but we must give our whole selves, and all things else to him, as *infinitely good in himself*, by a love of sincere and perfect *benevolence*. For this is properly divine charity. *Benevolence* is a love by which

which we wish all manner of good to the person beloved : a love by which we earnestly seek and procure whatever may be for his honour, interest or pleasure : by which we delight in all his advantages ; and are concerned at all his losses, &c. Now to apply all this to divine charity : It is then we make acts of the *love of benevolence* towards God, when we desire, seek and procure, as much as lies in us, the greater honour and glory of his name ; the propagation of his kingdom in our own hearts, and throughout the whole world ; and that all men may know him, love him, and serve him : when we rejoice at every thing that is agreeable to his holy will ; and are concerned at every thing that offends him. This is the proper exercise of the love of benevolence : this is divine charity.

2. Consider that our Lord has taught us the exercise of this divine charity, in the three first petitions of the Lord's prayer. Here we pray for the greater glory of his name : *Hallowed be thy name.* Here we pray that he may reign in all hearts by his grace : *Thy kingdom come.* Here we pray that all men upon earth may love and execute his will, even as the blessed do in heaven : *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* But does our heart go along with our lips, when we recite these petitions ? Do we sincerely desire, at that time, that all the world may know, love and serve the true and living God : that all his creatures in heaven and earth may give perpetual glory to him ; that the reign of sin may be abolished, and the kingdom of God may take possession of all hearts : that none may resist or rebel against his orders ; but that all may embrace,
and

and bow down, and adore his will ? If so, there is no doubt but we love God. Such as these are perfect acts of the love of God. But where a soul has no such dispositions, she makes no acts of the love of God ; though she repeats with her lips ever so often in the day : *O my God, I love thee.*

3. Consider, that one of the most perfect ways of exercising the love of God, is when we rejoice in him, and in his boundless perfections ; when we are delighted to think that he is what he is, infinitely good, infinitely holy, infinitely happy, infinitely perfect : That he is the sovereign Lord of all ; and nothing can be added to him, because he is every way infinite. O ! what a comfort, what a pleasure, what a joy it is to a true lover of God, to think that whatsoever may come to himself, or to any thing in the world, his love at least, whom he loves without comparison more than himself and all things else, will always be infinitely glorious, infinitely rich, and infinitely happy ! Of this kind is the love with which the blessed in heaven love God ; an eternal joy in God, and in all the beauties and perfections they contemplate in him : this is their eternal delight. O my soul, that it may be thine !

Conclude thou to love thy God, not in word only, but in deed and in truth. And in order to this, ever promote, as much as thou canst, his glory, his praise, the interests of his kingdom, and the fulfilling of all his wills ; as well in thyself, as in all others : ever rejoice in him : put thy heart continually in his hands : and give thyself and all things else to him a hundred times in the day. These are the best acts of divine love. *Pater. Ave.*

M E D I T A -

MEDITATION XXVII.

On charity to our neighbours.

1. **C**ONSIDER that after this *first* and *greatest* commandment of *loving God with our whole hearts*, &c. the next of the divine precepts is, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. 'On these two commandments, saith our Lord, (*Matt. xxii.*) dependeth the whole law and the prophets.' This love of our neighbours, (by whom we must understand all our fellow mortals without exception) is so absolutely necessary, that without it, though we spoke with the tongues of men and angels; and had the gift of prophecy, and all knowledge of the deepest mysteries; and faith enough to remove mountains, we should still be nothing: and though we should give our whole substance to the poor, and our bodies to the flames, it would profit us nothing. *1 Cor. xiii.* This mutual charity and love for one another was, the last and most pressing injunction of our dying Lord; it was his favourite commandment; and the badge, by which he would have all his followers known and distinguished. (*St. John xiii. 34, 35. Ch. xv. 12, 17.*) In consequence of this injunction, his first disciples, the primitive christians, had all *but one heart and one soul*. *Acts iv. 32.* And his apostles Peter and Paul both of them insist, that *above all things*, and *before all things*, we should cultivate this *mutual love*, as the *very bond of perfection*.

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(Colos. iii. 14. 1 Pet. iv. 8.) and the fulfilling of the whole law. (Rom. xiii. 9. Gal. v. 14.) And St. John the beloved disciple continually inculcates that there is no knowing nor loving God, without loving our neighbours ; and that if this love be wanting, we still abide in death. 1 John iii. and iv. O my soul, let us embrace this amiable virtue, this favourite virtue of Christ, and his saints ; let us be ever willing to lose any thing else rather than to lose this blessed charity.

2. Consider that this great commandment of loving one another, admits of no exceptions, either of nations or opinions : it extends to all men, even our most inveterate enemies and persecutors : we cannot be in the state of grace or salvation, if there be any one person upon earth, whom we exclude from our love. We are bound by the *old commandment* of the law, to love every *neighbour as ourselves* : we are bound by the *new commandment* of the Gospel of Christ to love every *neighbour even as Christ has loved us*. John xiii. 34. Can our love stand the test of these rules ? Are our thoughts, words and actions in relation to our neighbours regulated by the love we commonly have for ourselves ? Do we treat them as we would desire to be treated ourselves ? Are we disposed, to part with our own humour, our own convenience, our own inclinations, our pleasure or satisfaction, for the love of our neighbours, and rather than to give them occasion of grief or sin ? If not, how can we pretend that we *love them as Christ loved us* ; who laid down his very life for the love of us ?

3. Consider

3. Consider that the love, which we owe to our neighbours, in consequence of this great commandment of mutual charity, is not a carnal, worldly or natural affection, influenced by flesh and blood, or any other consideration but God. It is a branch of that same divine charity, by which we love God for his own goodness sake : it springs from the same root, it has the self-same motive : no other love of our neighbours can be called charity, but that which makes us love them in God, and for God's sake. Do we love our neighbours after this manner ? Do we love the image of God in them ? Do we consider them as redeemed by the blood of Christ ? Do we love them for God's sake, and because it is his holy will and commandment ? Do we love them in order to God and a happy eternity ? This is charity indeed. But then we must shew forth this charity towards our neighbours, *not by word and by tongue, but in deed and in truth* ; by exercising in their favour all the works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual, with a pure intention : and more especially by procuring, by all means in our power, and continually praying for their true and everlasting welfare.

Conclude to walk henceforth in the blessed paths of charity. If thou pretend to go to heaven by any other road, thou wilt certainly miss thy way.

Pater. Ave.

MEDITATION XXVIII.

On the great pattern of charity.

I. **C**ONSIDER, how Christ Jesus our Lord has given us himself for a pattern of charity, in the parable of the good Samaritan (*Luke x.*) He himself came down in person from his throne above to save poor man who had fallen among the infernal robbers, and was stript by them of all grace, and grievously wounded in all his faculties. He was the good shepherd that came down to seek the lost sheep. Here we discover the infinite charity both of the Father and of the Son. *By this hath the charity God appeared towards us, says the beloved disciple, because God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we may live by him. In this is charity: not as though we had loved God, but because he hath first loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. 1 John iv. 9 10.* The whole life of Christ was one continual exercise of divine charity in both its branches. From the first moment of his conception, in the womb of his blessed mother, till his expiring upon the cross, his soul was ever employed in adoring, glorifying, blessing, and loving his heavenly Father; and in offering himself to all his wills: the doing the will of him that sent him was his very food. *John iv. 34.* And for the love of his Father, and because it was his Father's will, he also spent his whole life in the love of us; ever

ever thinking on us, praying for us ; and labouring for our eternal salvation. O ! let all heaven and earth extoll this his charity unto all eternity.

2. Consider the charity which the son of God hath shewed to us poor sinners in his passion and death. Contemplate, O my soul, what a bitter agony, what a mortal anguish, what a bloody sweat, he endured for the love of thee, in the garden of Gethsemani : how he there bewailed thy sins with tears of blood. See how he was sold, and betrayed by one of his own disciples, denied by Peter, and forsaken by all the rest for the love of thee. How he was apprehended as a malefactor, bound, beaten and abused ; falsely accused, unjustly condemned ; muffled, spit upon, and loaded with all manner of reproaches and injuries for the love of thee. How he was exposed to the insolencies of an insulting mob ; cloathed in a fool's garment ; and suffered a Barrabbas to be preferred before him for the love of thee. How he was rent and torn with whips and scourges ; crowned with thorns ; derided as a mock king ; insulted and buffeted by a whole regiment of soldiers for the love of thee. How he was condemned to the most disgraceful and most cruel of deaths ; how he was obliged to bear a rough and heavy cross upon his wounded shoulders ; how he was drenched with gall and vinegar ; how he was violently stript of his cloaths (which now stuck fast to his wounds) how he was extended on the cross as on a rack ; how he was nailed to it with gross nails, driven through his hands and feet ; and hoisted up into the air for the love of thee.

How he was pleased to hang there between two thieves for the space of three hours, in most bitter anguish and torments, bleeding and dying for the love of thee. Ah! how much have thy sins cost this innocent lamb of God! Ah how dearly has he loved thee! In the midst of all his tortures, he had thee in his heart, and even then was pleading thy cause with his eternal Father, and purchasing mercy, grace and salvation for thee, when thy sins were crucifying him.

3. Consider that the Son of God has not only loved us, during the whole course of his mortal life; and loved us even unto death, by laying down his life for the love of us: but he has carried his love for us beyond the bounds of death, in an admirable legacy of love, which he bequeathed us the night before his passion, by means of which he remains always with us, in the divine mysteries. Here he feeds our souls with his precious body and blood. Here he unites us to himself in such a manner, that he abideth in us and we in him; and that we live by him. *John vi.* Here he is a source of all grace to our souls: the tree of life, the fountain of life and love, the manna of heaven, for the support of our pilgrimage till we come to the true land of promise; where he will give himself to us for all eternity. O infinite love! O with what reason does the church sing in one of her sacred hymns, *Se nascens dedit socium &c.* In his birth he gave us himself to be our companion; at his last supper to be our food; in his death to be our ransom; and in his heavenly kingdom to be our reward and everlasting happiness.

Conclude

Conclude to follow always this great pattern of love : and to give thyself wholly to him, who so many ways gives himself to thee. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION XXIX.

On fighting under the standard of Jesus Christ.

1. **C**ONSIDER that there are upon earth, and have been all along, two opposite kingdoms ; two opposite interests ; two opposite cities, Jerusalem and Babylon, the city of God, and the city of the devil ; two opposite standards, that of Jesus Christ, and that of satan. From the time that man unhappily fell from God by sin, satan set up his tyrannical usurpation : which he has, by all kind of subtleties and lies, endeavoured to maintain ever since ; by alluring poor deluded mortals with the glittering shew of worldly pomps, riches, and pleasures to become his slaves, and to fight under his standard. And ah ! how unhappily has he prevailed over millions ! what multitudes join with him against their God ! How is this wretched Babylon spread over all the earth !

2. Consider that Jesus Christ came into this world to set up his standard in opposition to the standard of satan : and to invite all men to follow him, promising to rescue his followers from all their evils, and to impart to them all his good. They that seriously correspond with his call, and join his royal standard, make up the city of God, the blessed Jerusalem,

Jerusalem, the church of the saints. But see now the immense difference between these two opposite cities, and their inhabitants: how happy the one, and how miserable the other. The children of Babylon are miserable indeed; they are slaves to passions that can never be satisfied, to a world that can never be contented, to infernal tyrants that are continually dragging them along with them towards hell: they are slaves to empty vanities, to childish toys, and lying follies; labouring under a variety of fears, cares, sorrows, uneasinesses, and innumerable other evils; without enjoying so much as any one solid or lasting satisfaction. But, O how happy are the children of Jerusalem even here! What joy, what peace and content, what comfort and pure pleasure in the soul, are commonly their portion even in this life; and heaven in the next? And shalt thou, my soul, stand one moment to deliberate which of the two thou wilt choose; the standard of Christ, or that of satan; Jerusalem or Babylon; good or evil; verity or vanity; truth or deceit; happiness or misery: heaven or hell?

3. Consider that the great design of all the foregoing meditations is to fix thee in the happy choice of following the standard of Jesus Christ. They all conspire to bring thee to this. Thy first beginning, and thy last end; thy creation and thy redemption through Christ; thy being dedicated to him in baptism; the happiness that is found in virtue, and the misery in vice: all the benefits of God; and his goodness in bearing with thee in thy sins: all the considerations on the four last things, and on the
love

love of God ; all these call upon thee, all press thee to flee away from the slavery and captivity of Babylon, and to hasten to Jerusalem ; to leave satan, and to come to Christ. Turn then, O my soul, turn away from this *Babel* of confusion, noise and disorder : break her chains from off thy neck, O captive daughter of Sion. Renounce for good and all the king of pride ; the tyrant that has usurped to himself the dominion over this world, and its deluded admirers : renounce his works and pomps, together with his associates, Mammon, Asmodeus, and all the princes of darkness, and all their slaves ; and turn thyself to the blessed *Jerusalem*, the city of peace ; and embrace the king of peace, and his glorious standard, with all thy heart : choose him for thy king for ever, pay him irrevocable homage : and promise him inviolable fidelity and obedience.

Conclude, since thou hast now chosen Jesus Christ to be thy king, to fight manfully, unto death, under his royal standard of the cross, against his and thy enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil. In order to this, learn well thy exercise of prayer : and the rules of the gospel, the military discipline which he has fixed for his soldiers. *Pater. Ave.*

MEDITATION XXX.

*On the rules prescribed by Jesus Christ
to his followers.*

1. **C**ONSIDER the laws of the military discipline prescribed by Jesus Christ, to all that desire to be his soldiers, *Mat. xvi. 24. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* The observance of these three articles makes a complete soldier of Christ. We must renounce ourselves: we must bear our crosses: and we must walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. The corruption of man by sin; the wounds that sin has left in all the faculties of the soul; the violence of our disorderly passions, and the bent of our natural inclinations to evil, infer a necessity of renouncing ourselves, of fighting against ourselves, of hating our natural inclinations, if we hope to be happy, either here or hereafter. We have not a more dangerous enemy than ourselves: the devil himself cannot hurt us half so much as we hurt ourselves when we follow our own will, and indulge our own inclinations. This then is the first article of the discipline of Jesus Christ, in opposition to our unhappy self-love, the root of all our evils, and its three principal branches, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.* The Son of God came down from heaven to engage us in this holy warfare. The humility, the poverty, the voluntary sufferings of his birth, of his life, and of his death, were all levelled against these enemies.

2. Consider

2. Consider that the soldier of Jesus Christ must stand to his colours; he must not run from the cross. He must bear and forbear; he must endure many conflicts; he must patiently submit to, and courageously go through the trials and hardships of this short campaign of his mortal life. He must not pretend to fare better than his captain and his king. All sufferings and hardships appear as nothing to a brave soldier when he is following his prince, and is happy in his company. The christian soldier then must be willing to carry his cross after Jesus Christ; who opened heaven to us, by the cross, and conducts his soldiers thither by the way of the cross. Embrace then, O my soul, this happy instrument of thy salvation; in which, if thou bearest it in a proper manner, thou wilt find an inexhaustible source of grace and comfort. Embrace the holy will of God, which lays the cross upon thee, to bring thee to himself. He knows what is best for thee; because he is infinitely wise: and he sends thee what he knows is for the best; because he is infinitely good, and good to thee. Thou canst not be in a safer or better way than in the way of the cross; by which Jesus Christ, and all his saints have gone to heaven. Even in this life, the true soldiers of Christ find greater sweetness in the cross, than in all the pleasures of this world.

3. Consider that the soldiers of Christ are called, as his first disciple were, to *follow him*; that is to walk in his footsteps, by an imitation of his life. He came down from heaven to be our teacher and our model: 'tis the great duty of all that desire to belong

belong to him, to copy after his blessed original, and to shew forth in themselves the life of Jesus Christ. *To learn of him to be meek and humble of heart.* To learn of him poverty of spirit, a contempt of the honours, riches and pleasures of this world, and a disengagement of the heart from all earthly things. To learn of him a horror for sin, and an obedience even unto death. In fine, to learn of him a perpetual conformity to the will of God, and an unbounded charity to every neighbour. Such was the life of Jesus Christ, and such must the life of all his soldiers be.

Conclude to embrace this discipline of Jesus Christ, in all its parts, which he came down from heaven to teach: and henceforward to renounce all *ungodliness and worldly desires, (Titus ii. 12, &c.)* and to live soberly, and justly, and godly, in this world: looking for the blessed hope and glorious coming of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and might cleanse us to himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works.
Pater. Ave.

A P R A Y E R

*Of a penitent sinner for the remission of
his sins.*

O Almighty and everlasting God, who hast created me to thy own image and likeness, and redeemed me by the precious blood of thy only Son: who hast thought on me, and loved me from all eternity; and out of pure love prepared a heaven for me; with all the necessary means to bring me thither: who hast borne with me, for so long a time, in my repeated offences and treasons against thee; hast still continued, with infinite goodness and mercy, to call, to invite, to press me to return to thee; notwithstanding all my monstrous ingratitude to thee, and my contempt of all thy graces; Behold I now desire, with my whole heart, to quit these husks of swine which have kept me so long at a distance from thy house, my true home; and to come back to thee: to obey the summons which thou hast now been pleased to send me; and to confess, and detest all my sins, in thy presence; in hopes of finding mercy at this time of mercy.

I desire now to come before thee, though infinitely unworthy, in the spirit of humility, and
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with a contrite heart; and to make at thy feet a general confession of all my sins. I acknowledge that from my first coming to the use of reason, to this very hour, my whole life has been nothing but sin and misery. Alas! I lost thee, I turned my back upon thee, I shamefully preferred worthless toys before thee, even from the very time I was first capable of knowing and loving thee! I have very seldom thought of thee: I have daily and hourly many ways broken thy commandments. Good God! what must then become of this poor wretch in the day of thy judgement: this wretch whose known and unknown sins are without number; and who has done so very little good, to put in the scales to counter-balance so much evil?

Must I then despair of thy mercy? must I give up the cause, and abandon myself to satan, sin and hell? No, my God; may thy infinite goodness forbid, I should fall into that bottomless pit, where none shall ever confess to thee. My iniquities are great, it is true: but thy goodness, thy mercy, thy power is still greater: Thou hast declared; it is not thy will the sinner should perish; but that he should be converted and live: Thou hast declared, there is more joy in thy heavenly court, over one penitent sinner, than over ninety nine just: Thy Son has shed his blood for me, to purchase for me a full forgiveness of all my sins. Here is my hope: this mercy I lay hold on; and nothing shall make me quit my hold. I know the worst of sinners have

have been cleansed from all their filth, in this sovereign bath. Should my case be even worse than the worst of theirs; the mercy and grace of my God, and the virtue of the precious blood of my Redeemer is abundantly sufficient, and will appear the more illustrious in my cure.

O infinite goodness, who hast endured me for so many years, since I first fell from thee by sin: who hast kept me all this while from falling into hell; and hast continually cherished me with innumerable favours, and graces: behold me now prostrate at thy feet, accusing myself of my crimes, and imploring thy mercy. I am that prodigal child, that have gone away into a far country from thee, and have squandered away all the substance thou gavest me; I have made myself a slave to the devil, who has set me to feed his swine, even my own brutish passions, and sensual inclinations; I have sought, but sought, alas! in vain, to satisfy my craving appetite with their husks: but now being made sensible of my misery; and being wearied with my own evil ways, I come back to thee. I acknowledge myself unworthy to be received in the quality of thy child, all I crave is thy mercy in the forgiveness of my manifold treasons: I dare not lift up my eyes to thee: I dare not ask for the meanest place in thy family. I find myself quite loaded, and oppressed, with the enormous weight of my sins. If I consider my own deserts, I can look for nothing but hell; which I have deserved a thousand and a thou-

sand times. I now hate and detest my evil ways,
 I abhor myself for having been so wicked and
 ungrateful to thee. I have even crucified thy
 Son, my divine lover, over and over again, by
 my sins. But, O thou fountain of mercy, have
 pity and compassion on this miserable wretch.
 Look not upon my sins, but upon the bowels of
 thy tender mercy, and the merits of my Re-
 deemer. Look upon the face of thy Christ; and
 upon all he has done and suffered for poor
 sinners. O mercy, mercy, mercy, through that
 blood which he shed for me in his agony in
 the garden of Gethsemani; through that blood
 he shed for me, when he was rent and torn
 with scourges, and crowned with thorns; through
 that blood he shed for me upon the cross. Grant
 this mercy, which he then asked for me, when
 he was bleeding and dying for me; and which
 he now implores sitting at thy right hand,
 where he is still the advocate of sinners. Hear
 also the prayers of thy holy church, spread
 throughout the whole earth, which she now of-
 fers in his name, and through his merits, im-
 ploring thy mercy at this time, for all her children,
 of which I am the most unworthy. Hear the pray-
 ers of the blessed Virgin, and of the whole church
 of heaven, whom I humbly beseech to be joint
 petitioners with the church upon earth, to obtain
 mercy for me and all poor sinners: through the
 same Jesus Christ thy Son.

And turning myself to thee, my dearest Jesus,
 my Redeemer, and my advocate, the great high
 priest

priest of God and man, the pastor and bishop of our souls, I beg of thee, to whom all power is given in heaven and earth, pardon, absolution, and full remission of all my sins. I am heartily sorry for all my offences : I desire to lay them all down at thy feet, to be cancelled by thy precious blood : I wish with all my soul I had never offended thy infinite goodness : I wish I could wash thy feet, like Magdalen, with penitential tears. O that I could worthily bewail my sins even with tears of blood. I resolve by thy grace rather to die, than to commit the like any more. I resolve to make the best satisfaction I am able, by bringing forth worthy fruits of penance. O discharge me this once from the dismal load of the guilt of my crimes ! O release all the bands that may keep my soul from thee, and thy heavenly kingdom : and then, as to this life, do with me what thou pleasest. I willingly accept from thy hands whatever crosses or sufferings thou shalt send : I will dedicate the remainder of my days to thee, daily to bewail my sins, and daily to present my heart to thee. I will make what amends I can for all my past offences, by a life of penance, and a life of love. I renounce from this moment, and for ever, the world, the flesh, and the devil : and all their suggestions, vanities and concupiscences : and I fully determine to be for ever thine. O cleanse my soul from all my past abominations : and let nothing henceforward, either in life or death, ever more separate me

from thee ; who with the Father, and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

The penitent may also here recite for the same intention the Psalm Miserere : or other devout prayers and acts of contrition, with which they find themselves most affected.

A P R A Y E R

For the whole state of Christ's church upon earth, and all the intentions of the J U B I L E E.

O Eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of all things, visible and invisible, Source of all our good ; infinitely good in thyself, and infinitely gracious, bountiful and good to us : Behold we thy poor servants, the work of thy hands, redeemed by the blood of thy only Son, come, in answer to his summons by his Vicegerent, to present ourselves, as humble petitioners, before the throne of thy mercy : we come all in a body, at this time, even all thy people upon earth ; and we come in communion with all thy church in heaven, hoping to be assisted by their prayers and merits ; and with Jesus Christ at our head, our High priest and Mediator, in whose precious blood we put all our trust. We prostrate ourselves here before thee, and we most humbly beseech thee to
sanctify

sanctify thy own most holy name, by sanctifying and exalting thy holy catholick church throughout the whole world. O eternal King, who hast sent thy only Son down from thy throne above, into this earth of ours, to establish a kingdom, here amongst us, from whence we might hereafter be translated to thy eternal kingdom: look down, we beseech thee, upon this kingdom of thy Son, and propagate it through all nations, and through all hearts. Sanctify it in all truth; maintain it in peace, unity, and holiness. Give to it Saints for its rulers, its chief pastor, and all its other prelates; enlighten them all with heavenly wisdom, and make them all men according to thy own heart. Give thy grace and blessing to all the clergy; and send amongst them that heavenly fire, which thy Son came to cast on the earth, and which he so earnestly desired should be enkindled. Assist and protect all apostolical missionaries, that they may zealously and effectually promote thy glory, and the salvation of souls redeemed by the blood of thy Son. Sanctify all religious men and women of all orders: give them the grace to serve thee with all perfection, according to the spirit of their institute, and to shine like lights to the rest of the faithful. Have mercy on all christian princes; grant them those lights and graces that are necessary for the perfect discharge of their duty to thee and to their subjects; that they may be true servants to thee the King of kings, true fathers to their people; and nursing fathers to thy church.

church. Have mercy on all magistrates and men in power ; that they may all fear thee, love thee, and serve thee ; and ever remember that they are thy deputies, and ministers of thy justice. Have mercy on all thy people throughout the world ; and give thy blessing to thy inheritance : remember thy congregation, which thou hast possessed from the beginning ; and give that grace to all thy children here upon earth, that they may do thy holy will in all things, even as the blessed do in heaven.

Extend thy mercy also to all poor infidels, that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death : to all those nations that know not thee, and that have not yet received the faith and law of thy Son their Saviour ; to all Pagans, Mahometans, and Jews. Remember, O Lord, that all these poor souls are made after thy own image and likeness, and redeemed by the blood of thy Son : O let not satan any longer exercise his tyranny over these thy creatures, to the great dishonour of thy name. Let not the precious blood of thy Son be shed for them in vain. Send among them zealous preachers and apostolick labourers, endued with the like graces and gifts as thy apostles were, and bless them with the like success, for the glory of thy name ; that all these poor souls may be brought to know thee, love thee, and serve thee here in thy church ; and bless thee hereafter for all eternity.

Look down also with an eye of pity and compassion on all those deluded souls, who under the name of christians, have gone away from the paths of truth



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